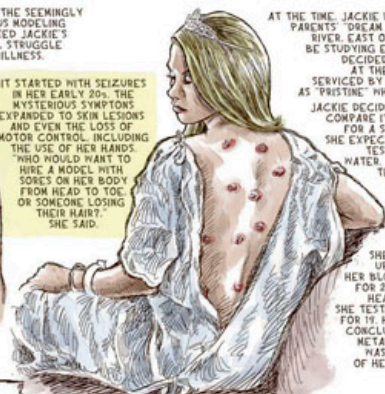


JACKIE, JACKIE YOUNG, MISS HOUSTON RODEO 2015. SHE'S BEEN MODELING SINCE SHE WAS A CHILD. BUT HER CAREER REALLY TOOK OFF WHEN SHE WON MISS DARQUE TAN IN 2009. SHE USED THE FLEXIBILITY AND INCOME AFFORDED BY A MODELING CAREER TO PUT HERSELF THROUGH COLLEGE AT THE UNIVERSITY OF HOUSTON-CLEAR LAKE.



BUT BEHIND THE SEEMINGLY GLAMOROUS MODELING LIFE LURKED JACKIE'S PERSONAL STRUGGLE WITH ILLNESS.

IT STARTED WITH SEIZURES IN HER EARLY 20s. THE MYSTERIOUS SYMPTOMS EXPANDED TO SKIN LESIONS AND EVEN THE LOSS OF MOTOR CONTROL, INCLUDING THE USE OF HER HANDS 'WHO WOULD WANT TO HIRE A MODEL WITH SORES ON HER BODY FROM HEAD TO TOE, OR SOMEONE LOSING THEIR HAIR?' SHE SAID.

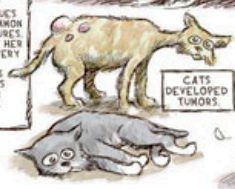


AT THE TIME, JACKIE RODEO RAN HER FAMILY IN HER PARENTS' "DREAM HOME" NEAR THE SAN JACINTO RIVER. EAST OF HOUSTON, SHE HAPPENED TO BE STUDYING ENVIRONMENTAL GEOLOGY, AND DECIDED TO HAVE HER WATER TESTED AT THE UNIVERSITY. THEIR HOME WAS SERVICED BY A WELL THAT WAS DESCRIBED AS "PRISTINE" WHEN THEY BOUGHT THE HOUSE. JACKIE DECIDED TO TEST THEIR WATER AND COMPARE IT TO CITY OF HOUSTON WATER FOR A SCHOOL HYDROLOGY PROJECT. SHE EXPECTED HER "PRISTINE" WATER TO TEST FAR SUPERIOR TO MUNICIPAL WATER. INSTEAD, HER FAMILY'S WATER TESTED HIGH IN HEAVY METALS, BACTERIA AND AN UNHEALTHY PH LEVEL. HER PROFESSORS POINTED OUT THAT YOU COULD ACTUALLY SEE THE TINY BITS OF METAL.

SHE FOLLOWED UP BY HAVING HER BLOOD TESTED FOR 21 DIFFERENT HEAVY METALS. SHE TESTED POSITIVE FOR 19. HER DOCTOR CONCLUDED HEAVY METAL EXPOSURE WAS THE CAUSE OF HER SEIZURES.



SUDDENLY, MANY SEEMINGLY DISPARATE FAMILY HEALTH ISSUES NOW APPEARED TO SHARE A COMMON CAUSE. EVEN BEFORE THE SEIZURES, JACKIE AND OTHER MEMBERS OF HER FAMILY SEEMED TO FALL ILL EVERY COUPLE OF MONTHS WITH SEVERE, FLU-LIKE SYMPTOMS AND RASHES. EVEN THEIR PETS HAD AN INORDINATE NUMBER OF ILLNESSES AND MEDICAL COMPLICATIONS.



CATS DEVELOPED TUMORS.

CHICKENS LOST THEIR FEATHERS AND STOPPED LAYING EGGS.



SIX SQUIRRELS THAT JACKIE'S NOW WAS REHABILITATING FOR TEXAS PARKS AND WILD-LIFE SUDDENLY DIED.

OF ALL JACKIE'S FAMILY MEMBERS, HER FATHER SEEMED TO GET SICK MOST OFTEN AND MOST SEVERELY. HE WOULD BECOME BED-RIDDEN WITH SEVERE SYMPTOMS AND RASHES SEVERAL TIMES A YEAR.

IN 2012, HE SNAPPED HIS SPINE WHILE TRYING TO LIFT A HEAVY FENCE THAT HAD FALLEN ON THEIR PROPERTY. MEDICAL TESTS SHOWED THAT HIS BONES HAD BECOME BRITTLE AND WREAK FROM PREVIOUSLY UNDIAGNOSED MULTIPLE MYELOMA, A CANCER THAT STARTS IN BONE MARROW.

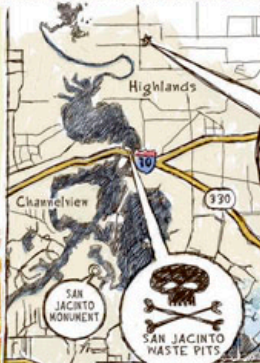


JACKIE'S MOTHER FINALLY DECIDED TO START TRUCKING IN WATER SO THEY COULD AVOID THE WELL WATER JACKIE'S SYMPTOMS STARTED TO IMPROVE AND THE CHICKENS STARTED LAYING EGGS AGAIN.

IT'S DIFFICULT TO KNOW THE SOURCE OF CONTAMINATION OF THEIR WELL WATER WITH CERTAINTY, BUT JACKIE SUSPECTS THE SAN JACINTO RIVER WASTE PITS AS A PRIMARY SOURCE. THEY WERE BUILT ALONG THE RIVER IN THE 1960s FOR DISPOSAL OF PAPER MILL WASTE. THANKS TO SUBSIDENCE AND WATER FLOW, THE PITS ARE NOW PARTIALLY SUBMERGED IN THE SAN JACINTO RIVER.

FOR OVER 40 YEARS, THE PITS SAT UNCOVERED AND SINKING INTO THE RIVER, GRADUALLY POISONING THE SURROUNDING ENVIRONMENT. THE SITE WAS ADDED TO THE EPA'S SUPERFUND LIST IN 2008 AND A TEMPORARY CAP WAS INSTALLED IN 2011. UNFORTUNATELY, THE CAP IS ALREADY SHOWING SIGNS OF FAILURE AFTER A MINOR FLOODING EVENT. ASIDE FROM HEAVY METALS, THE PITS HAVE EXTREMELY HIGH CONCENTRATIONS OF DIOXIN, WHICH IS ONE OF THE MOST POISONOUS COMPOUNDS EVER CREATED BY MAN.

WARNING SIGNS ARE POSTED ALL OVER THE AREA ADVISING PEOPLE NOT TO EAT FISH, CLAMS AND OYSTERS CAUGHT IN THE AREA, BUT SOME DO IT ANYWAY. AND THERE'S EVIDENCE FROM LAUNDRY THAT SOME IS SOLD COMMERCIALY.



JACKIE'S FAMILY HOME. THEY WALKED AWAY FROM IT, LETTING THE BANK FORECLOSE, AND MOVED TO NORTHWEST HOUSTON.

THEY TOOK A \$350,000 LOSS ON THE HOME.



HURRICANE IKE

MANY RESIDENTS IN THE AREA ARE WORRIED ABOUT THE INTEGRITY OF THE TEMPORARY CAP, WHICH IS ESSENTIALLY A TARP WITH ROCKS OVER IT. IF A HURRICANE COMES THROUGH THE AREA, IT COULD DAMAGE THE CAP, AND THE ACCOMPANYING STORM SURGE AND HIGH WINDS COULD SPREAD TOXINS THROUGHOUT THE AREA. JACKIE SAYS THAT MANY OF THE HEALTH ISSUES SHE AND HER FAMILY SUFFERED INCREASED DRAMATICALLY AS A RESULT OF HURRICANE IKE. "OUR FAMILY WAS NEVER THE SAME AFTER IKE."

LAST YEAR, JACKIE PUT HER GEOLOGY DEGREE AND PERSONAL PASSION FOR THE ENVIRONMENT TO WORK WHEN SHE TOOK A JOB WITH THE ADVOCACY GROUP 'TEXANS TOGETHER' AS PROJECT MANAGER FOR THE SAN JACINTO RIVER PROJECT. THE GROUP IS FIGHTING FOR FULL REMEDIATION OF THE WASTE SITE NEXT WEEK. WE'LL TAKE A CLOSER LOOK AT THE SITE THAT HOUSTON'S OWN 'ERIN BROCKOVICH' IS WORKING TO RESTORE - AN AREA THAT PLAYED A CRUCIAL ROLE IN TEXAS HISTORY.

THE SAN JACINTO MONUMENT STANDS A SHORT DISTANCE FROM THE WASTE PITS AND THE POLLUTED WATERS OF THE SAN JACINTO RIVER AND UPPER GALVESTON BAY. TEXAS FOUGHT FOR ITS INDEPENDENCE HERE, BUT HAS SINCE QUIETLY SURRENDERED THESE SACRED ENVIRONS TO THE TOXIC REALITIES OF SPEEDING INDUSTRIALIZATION.

